

Message Text

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44

ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-10 CIAE-00 INR-07

IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-07 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 /113 W

----- 128044

R 051439Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9325

INFO USERDA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION IAEA VIENNA

UNCLAS THE HAGUE 6154

BRUSSELS FOR ERDA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, NL

SUBJ: DUTCH ENERGY R&D SETS NEW COURSE

REF: (A) THE HAGUE 0283; (B) THE HAGUE 0744

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: A NEW ORGANIZATION, THE NETHERLANDS ENERGY CENTER, HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED TO PULL TOGETHER THE DUTCH ENERGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT. THIS MESSAGE OUTLINES THE BACKGROUND OF THE CENTER'S CREATION AND WHAT IT IS DOING. END SUMMARY.

2. UNTIL RECENTLY ENERGY R&D IN THE NETHERLANDS WAS CARRIED OUT BY THE REACTOR CENTRUM NEDERLAND (RCN) IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE CENTRAL ORGANIZATION FOR APPLIED RESEARCH (NNO) AND THE FOUNDATION FOR FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH INTO MATTER (FOM) (REFA). SINCE RCN RESEARCH HAS BEEN SHIFTING GRADUALLY FROM NUCLEAR ENERGY TOWARD ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES AND CONSERVATION (REF B), ECONOMICS MINISTER DECIDED TO EXPAND RCN ACTIVITIES AND REORGANIZE THE INSTITUTE EFFECTIVE AUGUST

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1, THE NETHERLANDS ENERGY CENTER (ECN). THE NEW FOUNDATION'S

MAIN OBJECTIVE WILL BE AN INTERGRATED APPROACH TO ENERGY PROBLEMS INCLUDING COORDINATION OF DUTCH ENERGY RESEARCH. ECN WILL ALSO ACQUIRE AND DISTRIBUTE KNOW-HOW AND EXPERIENCE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC, GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES INSTITUTIONS AND ENTERPRISES.

3. TO COMPLY WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST AND THE ADVICE OF THE NATIONAL ENERGY RESEARCH STEERING GROUP (LSEO), ECN WILL ALSO ACCOMMODATE THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED ENERGY STUDY CENTER (ESC). ESC WILL WORK ON NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ENERGY STUDIES COVERING SUBJECTS SUCH AS PRODUCTION, TRANSPORTATION, STORAGE, CONVERSION AND CONSUMPTION OF ENERGY: ACT AS DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION CENTER; AND CONTRIBUTE TO INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN ENERGY.

4. DURING THE PAST FEW MONTHS, RCN-ECN HAS BEGUN A NUMBER OF NON-NUCLEAR ENERGY RESEARCH PROJECTS, SOME OF WHICH WILL BE PURSUED BY ECN, WHILE OTHERS WILL BE CARRIED OUT AS JOINT GOVERNMENT-INDUSTRY PROJECTS UNDER ECN SUPERVISION AND COORDINATION. ONE SUCH PROJECT IS THE STUDY AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY STORAGE IN FLY-WHEELS; ANOTHER IS A GUIDING AND COORDINATING ROLE BY ECN IN THE IEA INTERNATIONAL WIND ENERGY STUDY, FOR WHICH THE NETHERLAND HAS BEEN APPOINTED LEAD COUNTRY.

5. IN THE 1975 ANNUAL REPORT, RCN EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT STAGNATING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN ENERGY RESEARCH, NOTING THAT PROJECTS IN WHICH THE NETHERLANDS IS PARTICIPATING ARE NEARING COMPLETION OR HAVE BEEN DISCONTINUED, WHILE THERE ARE DIFFICULTIES IN EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH NEW PROJECTS. THE REPORT REFERS SPECIFICALLY TO UNCERTAINTY ABOUT CONTINUED DUTCH PARTICIPATION IN THE JOINT GERMAN/BENELUX SNR-300 FAST BREEDER REACTOR PROJECT AND WITHDRAWAL FROM OECD NUCLEAR ENERGY AGENCY'S RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT PROJECT EUROCHEMIE, AS WELL AS TO EC CONTROVERSY ABOUT A SITE FOR THE JOINT EUROPEAN TORUS (JET) PROJECT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR FUSION REACTORS. ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IS REQUIRED PARTICULARLY IN RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT AND STORAGE OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE BECAUSE EFFECTIVE DUTCH CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR

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AND NON-NUCLEAR ENERGY SOURCES CAN TAKE PLACE ONLY IN AN INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RESEARCH, ENERGY, ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976THEHA06154
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760414-1171
From: THE HAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761174/aaaacmpp.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION OES
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 THE HAGUE 283, 76 THE HAGUE 744
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: oatisao
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 JUL 2004 by schwenja>; APPROVED <20 AUG 2004 by oatisao>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DUTCH ENERGY R&D SETS NEW COURSE
TAGS: TECH, NL, NETHERLANDS ENERGY CENTER
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006